

Voting Curriculum



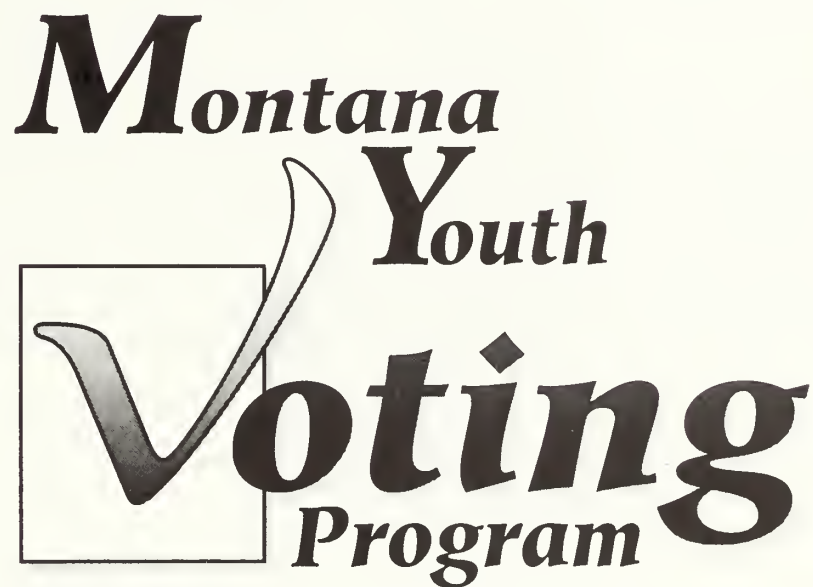
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MONTANA YOUTH VOTING CURRICULUM



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Superintendent of Public Instruction

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A special thank you for the many contributions made
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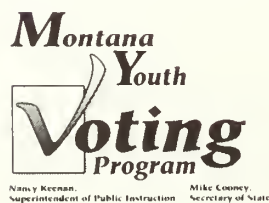
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and the many, many others who contributed so much in making this
Montana Youth Voting Program curriculum a reality

Thank you



INTRODUCTION

August 1, 1992

Dear Students:

Government affects us all, every day, in all aspects of our lives.

This year the voters of Montana will be electing a president to run our country as well as various state and local officials who will play key roles in the daily operation of our government.


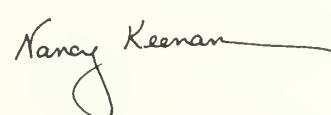
As you can see from the tables on page six of this booklet, voter participation in the United States has been consistently low for quite some time and the trend is continuing. This is a critical problem for our society because the future of our democracy depends on full citizen participation.

The Montana Youth Voting Program (MYVP), which was created by the 1991 legislature, is an exciting new program designed to encourage voter participation. Thanks to our sponsor, IBM, five counties will be a part of the program this year. Through the cooperation of your principal, teachers, and county Election Administrator, your county is one of the five chosen to participate. In the following years we hope to expand our program to include students in grades 3-12 from all counties in Montana.

It is our hope that the MYVP will interest and educate you on the issues, the candidates, and the processes of the upcoming election. Then, on November 3, you can go to the polls and responsibly cast an MYVP ballot to let Montanans know how you feel about the issues and the candidates. Of course, those of you who will be 18 by November 3 will be able to vote as a registered voter.

Enjoy the program and don't forget to **VOTE** on election day.

Sincerely,



International Business Machines Corporation

100 North Park Ave
Helena, Montana 59601
406/444-5000

August 5, 1992

To the Students of Montana:

We at IBM are very pleased to be able to sponsor the "Montana Youth Voting Program." IBM has always been interested in education and devotes much of its resources to supporting educational programs. We realize that a well educated work force is a benefit to all of us.

In this election year of 1992 we feel it is very important that the students of Montana have a chance to better understand the voting procedure. It is our hope that by sponsoring this program you, as future voters of Montana, will not only be better educated in our form of government and the important role that the individual plays, but that you will also be more active, involved adult citizens.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you in this very worthwhile endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. Randle Romney".

R. Randle Romney
Branch Manager
IBM Montana

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VOTER PARTICIPATION

Voter Participation Montana General Elections

Year	Voting age pop.	# voting	% of voting age pop.
1982	575,000	328,082	57%
1984*	588,000	395,006	67%
1986	595,000	326,436	54%
1988*	581,000	378,981	65%
1990	576,961	326,652	56%

Voting age pop. is estimated by the U.S. Census. Figures from 1982 & 1984 are for July; other years are for November. Statistics provided by the Montana Secretary of State's office, July 1992.

*presidential election years

Voter Participation in 16 Other Democracies

Average Since 1945

* This number appears high when compared to other statistics because it is an average since 1945. The years 1952, 1960, 1964, and 1968 all produced an uncommonly high voter turnout.

Source: Gary Owen and Sidney Verba, "American Voter Participation: The Shape of the Problem," paper presented to the symposium on American Voter Participation, sponsored by Harvard University and the American Broadcasting Companies, Inc., Washington, D.C., October 1983, p.13.

Country	% of votes
Australia	95.4
Italy	92.6
Belgium	92.5
New Zealand	90.4
Denmark	85.8
Sweden	84.9
Israel	81.4
Norway	80.8
France	79.3
Finland	79.0
United Kingdom	76.9
Canada	76.5
Ireland	74.7
Japan	73.1
Switzerland	64.5
United States	58.5 *

CALENDAR FOR MONTANA'S 1992 GENERAL ELECTION

JUNE 19	DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY INITIATIVE PETITIONS FOR THE 1992 GENERAL ELECTION TO COUNTY ELECTION ADMINISTRATOR FOR CERTIFICATION OF SIGNATURES; LAST DAY FOR WITHDRAWAL OF SIGNATURES
JULY 17	DEADLINE FOR COUNTY ELECTION ADMINISTRATORS TO VERIFY AND FORWARD COMPLETE CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY INITIATIVE PETITIONS FOR THE 1992 GENERAL ELECTION TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE
JULY 29	DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING INDEPENDENT AND MINOR PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES' PETITIONS FOR THE 1992 GENERAL ELECTION TO COUNTY ELECTION ADMINISTRATOR FOR CERTIFICATION OF SIGNATURES
AUGUST 5	DEADLINE FOR COUNTY ELECTION ADMINISTRATORS TO VERIFY AND FORWARD INDEPENDENT AND MINOR PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES' PETITIONS FOR THE 1992 GENERAL ELECTION TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE
AUGUST 20	BEGINNING OF PERIOD FOR MAKING ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS
SEPTEMBER 18	GENERAL ELECTION ABSENTEE BALLOTS AVAILABLE
OCTOBER 5	VOTER REGISTRATION FOR GENERAL ELECTION CLOSES
OCTOBER 19	DEADLINE FOR WRITE-IN CANDIDATES TO FILE A DECLARATION OF INTENT
NOVEMBER 2	NOON - LAST DAY AND TIME TO ACCEPT APPLICATIONS FOR ABSENTEE BALLOT
NOVEMBER 3	GENERAL ELECTION DAY
NOVEMBER 23	STATE CANVASS COMPLETE

Montana Elections

REGISTER AND VOTE!!!

HOW CAN I REGISTER TO VOTE?

You can do this at the county election administrator's office, or if you already have a registration card, you may fill the card out and mail it to that office. Montana now has what is known as "Motor Voter." This allows people to register to vote when they renew or obtain a driver's license.

IF I REGISTER ONCE, WILL I EVER NEED TO REGISTER AGAIN?

It is not uncommon to have to register more than once in a lifetime. You must register if you move to a different county or state. You also need to register if you change your name. Finally, if you fail to vote in a presidential general election your name will be taken off the list and it will be necessary to register before you can vote again.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO VOTE?

A person must be (1) registered to vote, (2) a U.S. citizen, (3) at least 18 years old by the date of the election and (4) a resident of the state and county for at least 30 days before the date of the election. Persons who are 17 years old, but will be 18 years old by election day, may register to vote by the deadline, and be permitted to vote.

A person must NOT be (1) a convicted felon currently serving a sentence in a penal institution or (2) determined to be of unsound mind by a court of law.

IS THE VOTING PROCEDURE DIFFICULT?

The actual voting process is a simple one. Depending on the time of day, it may take no more than 10 minutes. Most polling places are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

As you walk into the polling place, you will come to a table where two or three election judges will be sitting. You will tell the first election judge your name. He or she will find your name in the precinct register (which contains the names of all the registered voters in that precinct) and ask you to sign next to it. This person will say your name to the second election judge who will repeat it out loud and write it in the poll book.

You will then be handed a ballot which you take to a private booth to vote. When you are finished voting fold the ballot, or place it in an envelope if one is provided, and give it to the election official next to the ballot box, who will then place your ballot in the box for you.

All of these rules must be followed to ensure the fairness of the election.

WHAT IF I CAN'T MAKE IT TO THE POLLS ON ELECTION DAY?

Voters may vote by absentee ballot if they (1) expect to be absent from the county or precinct on election day, (2) are chronically ill or in general poor health, (3) are handicapped or elderly and are assigned to an inaccessible polling place, or 4) are unable to go to the polls due to physical incapacity. Voters may apply to the election administrator for an absentee ballot 75 days before the election.

Ballots are available 45 days before the election, and are not available after noon the day before the election unless the voter has a sudden health emergency before 3:00 p.m. on the Friday before noon of the election. Ballots may be delivered to incapacitated voters by a special absentee ballot board of election judges.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PRIMARY OR GENERAL ELECTION?

The primary election is held to allow the voters of each political party to choose who will represent their party on the general election ballot. Anyone meeting the qualifications for office may enter the primary race. On election day voters must choose one party and vote only for candidates of that party. This election nominates a candidate for major political parties. The nominees for each office go on to run against each other and any independent in the general election. This election is held in June on the first Tuesday after the first Monday.

The candidates that win the primary election begin another campaign for the general election and in November the voters elect one person who will fill each office. During the general election voters are not required to choose one party and vote only for candidates of that party. This election is held in November on the first Tuesday after the first Monday.

ELECTORAL COLLEGE

The Electoral College was written into the Constitution in 1787 as a compromise. The authors decided they did not want the president elected by Congress, or directly by the people, so they provided an alternative, the Electoral College. The electors are a group of people appointed in each state, by their party, to elect the president and the vice president.

In Montana, the names of the presidential candidates appear on the ballot, but we, the voters, are not actually electing the president. Actually, we are electing the group of people known as electors who are pledged to later support that candidate.

The number of electoral votes each state is given is determined by the number of U.S. senators it has plus the number of U.S. representatives. Montana, for example, has three electors for this presidential election. One exception is Washington, D.C., which has no senators or representatives, but has three electoral votes. The total number of electors is 538.

In December, the electors of Montana from the party whose candidate received the most popular votes, convene in Helena to vote for a president and a vice president. Montana has enacted a law which requires electors to vote for whom they are pledged. Montana's law specifies that all electors must vote for the candidate with the highest popular vote. In Helena, the electors prepare their vote and send it by registered mail to the president of the senate. Both houses of Congress meet to count the votes on January 6th.

To win the election, a candidate must get a majority (270) of the electoral votes. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes, the House of Representatives must elect the president and the Senate must elect the vice president.

In some states, electors are not bound by law to vote for the candidate with the most popular votes in their state. This could break the deadlock if one candidate was close. For example, if one of the candidates had 268 votes, it is possible that two electors from either of the other candidates' slate could be persuaded to change their votes and push the closest candidate over the top. If, however, no candidate is close to obtaining the 270 votes, the 1993 House of Representatives must elect our next president.

When the House must select the president, each state has only one vote. If the delegates of a state are evenly divided between candidates, no vote is cast. For a candidate to win the election 26 of the 50 votes are needed.

For the vice presidential election, each senator has one vote. The selection is made between the candidates with the most electoral votes. A majority of the votes is needed to claim a new vice president.

INITIATIVE PETITIONS

The state constitution or state law can be amended directly by a vote of the people. If a person wants to change the law or the constitution, they may circulate a petition calling for an election on a certain matter.

Statutory Initiative Petitions

To enact or amend a state law, the number of registered voters that sign the petition must be equal to at least 5 percent of the total number of registered voters in the state. The total number of voters is determined by the total number of votes cast for the office of governor in the last general election. For the 1992 election year, 18,351 signatures are required.

To ensure that the voters who sign a petition represent people from throughout the state, not one particular area, there is an additional distribution requirement. The petition must be signed by at least 5 percent of the registered voters in no less than one-third of the state's 100 legislative districts.

Constitutional Initiative Petitions

To amend the state's constitution, the same petition process used for statutory initiatives is followed with the exception that more signatures are required. Instead of 5 percent of the registered voters, 10 percent must sign a constitutional initiative petition. It also must get 10 percent of the registered voters in at least forty legislative districts. For the 1992 election year, 36,702 signatures are required.

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR GETTING A PETITION FILED?

All petitions must be filed in the Secretary of State's office by 5:00 p.m. of the third Friday of the fourth month before the election when the initiative is to be voted upon. For general elections, this means that the deadline will fall at the end of the third week in July.

The reason that the petition must be filed so far in advance of the election is to allow for the text of the measure along with supporting and opposing arguments to be prepared and printed in the Voter's Information Pamphlet. The measure must also be included on the ballot, which must be printed and available no later than 45 days before the election. This also allows voters time to educate themselves on the measure so that they can make an informed choice when they go to vote.

UNITED STATES CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

WHAT AMENDMENTS TO THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION ALLOWED FOR GREATER VOTER PARTICIPATION?

In the early history of the United States, a majority of the people's views were not represented because of strict restrictions at the polls. Over the years, changes have been made to our Constitution to improve the voting system and broaden the representation. Following is a list of the changes, called amendments, that have given more citizens the right to vote.

Amendment XV 1870 - The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. (This amendment gives people of all races the right to vote.)

Amendment XIX 1920 - The right of the citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex. (This amendment gives women the right to vote.)

Amendment XXIV 1964 - The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax. (This amendment gave people of all financial backgrounds the right to vote by disallowing a poll tax.)

Amendment XXVI 1971 - The right of the citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of age. (This amendment gave citizens the right to vote at 18 years of age instead of 21 years.)

The Candidates

QUALIFICATIONS

To be elected to the numerous offices of the state and also of the nation, a candidate must meet minimum requirements to ensure that he or she is qualified to do the job. Listed below are the various offices one can run for and the qualifications for each position.

President -

1. Candidate must be at least 35 years old.
2. Candidate must have lived in the U.S. for 14 years.
3. Candidate must be a natural born citizen.

The term for President is four years and no person may be elected to office for more than two terms.

Vice President - Must meet the same qualifications as the president

U.S. Senators -

1. Candidate must be at least 30 years old.
2. Candidate must have been a citizen of the U.S. for at least nine years.
3. Candidate must live in the state in which he or she wishes to be elected.

The term for U.S. Senators is six years.

U.S. Representatives -

1. Candidate must be at least 25 years old.
2. Candidate must have been a citizen of the U.S. for at least seven years.
3. Candidate must live in the state in which he or she wishes to be elected.

The term for U.S. Representatives is two years.

U.S. Supreme Court Justices - These people are appointed by the President and approved by the Senate. The Constitution provides no qualifications for serving on the Supreme Court. Justices are appointed for life.

Governor of Montana, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, and State Auditor all must meet the following qualifications:

1. Candidate must be at least 25 years old.
2. Candidate must be a citizen of the U.S.
3. Candidate must have resided in the state for at least two years preceding the election.

The term for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, and State Auditor is four years.

Attorney General - Candidate must meet the same qualifications as the Governor and have practiced law five years in Montana.

The term for Attorney General is four years.

Superintendent of Public Instruction - Candidate must meet the same qualifications as the Governor and have a bachelor's degree in education from an accredited school.

The term for Superintendent of Public Instruction is four years.

Clerk of the Supreme Court - Candidate must be a resident of Montana for one year prior to the general election.

The term for Clerk of the Supreme Court is six years.

State Supreme Court Justices -

1. Candidate must have practiced law in Montana five years prior to his or her election.
2. Candidate must have lived in the state for the two years preceding the election.
3. Candidate must live in the state during his or her term.

The term for State Supreme Court Justices is eight years. They are elected as nonpartisan.

Montana District Court Judges -

1. Candidate must be a citizen of the United States.
2. Candidate must have lived in Montana two years prior to the election.
3. Candidate must have practiced law in Montana five years prior to the election.
4. Candidate must reside in the district in which he or she is elected after the election.

The term for District Court Judges is six years.

Public Service Commissioners -

1. Must be a registered voter.
2. Must live in the district in which he or she wishes to be elected.

The term for Public Service Commissioners is four years.

State Senators and State Representatives -

1. A candidate must be a resident of Montana for one year preceding the general election.
2. For six months prior to the election a candidate must live in the county if the district he or she wishes to be elected in is contained in that county. If the district is contained in two different counties, the candidate must live in the district in which he or she wishes to be elected.

The term for State Senators is four years.

The term for State Representatives is two years.

INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES

HOW DOES SOMEONE RUN FOR OFFICE AS AN INDEPENDENT OR MINOR PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE?

Requirements for independent presidential candidates to appear on the general election ballot are slightly different than independent candidates running for other offices. The candidate must get 5 percent of the total votes cast for the successful candidate for governor at the last general election. For the 1992 election year, 9,531 signatures are required to put an independent presidential candidate on the ballot in November. This candidate will also have a slate of electors in Montana waiting and hoping to be chosen to go to the electoral college to place their votes for president.

In Montana, all petitions must be filed with the Secretary of State's office by the county election administrators no later than 90 days before the general election. However, the petitions first must be submitted to county election administrators at least one week prior to this deadline. The election administrators will verify the number of registered voters that signed the petition and forward them to the Secretary of State's office.

HOW DOES SOMEONE RUN AS AN INDEPENDENT OR MINOR PARTY CANDIDATE FOR AN OFFICE OTHER THAN THE PRESIDENCY?

For all other independent candidates to be placed on the general election ballot, the individual must circulate a petition and file it with the Secretary of State's office before the primary election. If the candidate receives enough signatures of registered voters to equal 5 percent of the total number of votes the last successful candidate for that office obtained, his or her name will appear on the ballot.

The deadline for submitting signatures to the local county election administrator's office for verification of the signatures is one week before the primary election. The county election administrator will then send the certified petitions to the Secretary of State's office no later than 5:00 p.m. the day before the **primary election**. If the candidate receives enough signatures, he or she will appear on the **general election** ballot.

BE AN INFORMED VOTER!

Voting is a great responsibility, and it is best to do some research on the candidates so you can discover who you think will best perform the duties of office. The following are places you can look which will be helpful in your search for information.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

Publications will, of course, cover the campaigns of the candidates and give you the most up-to-date information. However, when reading articles, you must read with a critical eye. Remember the story is told through the reporter's eyes. His or her view of an event may be slightly different than another reporter's view. The best way to understand what really happened is to read several different newspapers or magazines about the same event. This way you can put all of your information together to better understand what really occurred.

CAMPAIGN SPEECHES AND INTERVIEWS

Perhaps a candidate will be giving a campaign speech that you can attend. This is an excellent opportunity to gain information. These speeches will give you an idea how a candidate stands on issues, and also the promises he or she is making.

Interviews will give you a more personal look at the candidate. A candidate's character may be an important consideration when deciding on the best person for the job.

DEBATES AND PUBLIC FORUMS

Debates and public forums are also held frequently during the campaign period. Debates are another good source for information on how candidates stand on the issues. These, along with forums, are perfect opportunities to observe the differences between candidates.

Forums consist of the candidates for one or several offices who are asked to come and answer questions. After the questions on the agenda are answered, the audience is usually welcome to ask questions of their own. These forums are extremely helpful to voters who are trying to decide who is the best candidate for the job.

CANDIDATE DEBATES

It is estimated that 85 million people watched the presidential debates in 1984. Ninety percent of Americans have seen a debate at one time in their lives. Why? What happens in a debate that compels so many people to sit in front of the television and watch the candidates?

Debates serve three purposes. One purpose is to inform the voters so that they can make an intelligent choice at the polls. Another reason debates are held is to provide the candidates an opportunity to speak for themselves. The final purpose of a debate is to get voters interested in the election and educate them about the issues.

Helping voters get information about candidates is an important task. If all voters make an informed choice, the best person for the job will be elected. By giving the candidates a chance to speak for themselves, the debate informs voters. A debate is the one place the candidates must rely on themselves.

During a campaign speech, the speech you hear is usually written by a professional speech writer. The campaign commercial you watch on television is often produced by a media specialist, and the letter you receive asking for a contribution was more than likely written by a professional fund raiser. This is often true in larger campaigns. A debate is spontaneous and leaves the candidate on his or her own. He or she must be prepared and knowledgeable about the issues. These candid talks help to promote public interest and educate people about the issues that are important in the election.

Behind the Scenes

The candidate's goal, of course, is to get elected. Every decision is considered carefully as to what effect it will have on viewers. Even curtain colors, the placement of furniture and camera angles are major decisions. The goal of television broadcasters is to attract a large audience. An exciting, heated debate will help captivate an audience.

Because everyone has different objectives, a negotiating session sometimes take place before there is a debate. Negotiations can be long and arduous, but everything must be agreed upon before the debate takes place.

In Front of the Camera

The format or structure of the debate seems to be the most important detail to work out in negotiations. Any format may be used that puts candidates face-to-face talking about their views and responding to their opponents.

The modified press conference is one form a debate may take. With this format, many journalists are in attendance and are allowed to ask questions. After the candidate answers one question, a follow-up question is allowed. The next candidate goes through the same procedure, then each has a chance to comment on the opponent's answer. This ensures equal air time for the candidates. The problem with this format is that it does not provide much opportunity to challenge a candidate who is dodging the questions. Also, the issues that are most important to the public are sometimes missed.

Another format that is often used is the single moderator format. Only one person asks the questions and ensures that the candidates do not duck the issues by following-up immediately with more questions. The moderator of a debate like this must be intelligent and skilled to make sure each candidate gets equal air time. With this format, candidates also have a chance to ask questions of each other. This usually leads to a much livelier debate and highlights differences between candidates.

The Impact

Debates rarely change the course of an election. They usually just confirm the voter's choice. In an extremely close race the debate can have a significant impact. The biggest influence a debate has is on undecided voters. Watching the debate may help a voter who is unsure decide which candidate he or she agrees with the most.

Debates affect people in other ways. They can kindle an interest in the issues and in the election itself. They may help to increase voter participation. They also provide information about a candidate's character which may or may not be important to a voter. Finally they put the candidates on record. This way, once in office, candidates can be held accountable for the promises they have made.

It is up to each individual to decide what is important to him or her, go to the polls and make an informed choice.

Election Issues

Oftentimes voters identify with a candidate because he or she feels the same about an issue. The candidate's opinions on the issues important to you should be something you look at when evaluating a candidate.

Legislation on many issues has been voted upon or is still before the 102d Congress. The legislation that will come before Congress will play an important role in the presidential race because it is these issues that the next president will have to handle in office. The following is a small sample of the legislation which has been considered and some of the matters which are still to be considered. These articles are a general overview of and an introduction to these issues.

ELECTORAL PROCESS

Joseph Cantor and Thomas Durbin, Coordinators
Congressional Research Service
The Library of Congress
4-07-92

National elections, reapportionment of the House of Representatives, and signs of voter discontent with government will generate interest in the U.S. electoral process in 1992. Five aspects of the process that will either come before or directly affect Congress are campaign finance, voter registration, term limits, the Voting Rights Act, and redistricting/reapportionment.

Congress has devoted attention to the nation's campaign finance system, acting on concerns over the high cost of elections and candidates' reliance on PAC funding. The House and Senate passed S.3 and H.R. 3750, major democratic bills, in the first session. While the bills differ significantly, both provide for voluntary spending limits in congressional elections in exchange for public benefits or funding, limitation or prohibition on PAC donations, and closing perceived loopholes in current law. A conference committee is expected to be appointed in the second session, and President Bush has promised to veto any measure that contains campaign spending limits and public financing.

The House passed a bill in 1990 to require each State to establish procedures to permit voter registration (1) in person, simultaneous with application for a driver's licenses (2) by mail application, and (3) in person, at specified government agencies; the Senate did not act. In 1991, the Senate considered the National Voter Registration Act of 1991, but failed to pass a cloture rule twice. The bill may be reconsidered in the Senate in 1992, with the outcome uncertain as to a cloture vote's success or whether the House will refrain from acting until the Senate passes its version.*

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 plays a significant role in congressional and state legislative redistricting. Section 2 of the Act prohibits any voting procedure that results in the denial or abridgement of the right to vote based on race, color, or membership in a language minority. As violations can occur in congressional and state legislative redistricting plans, courts have required these plans to provide meaningful representation for protected minority groups. In August 1992, the bilingual election provisions of Section 203 will expire, perhaps leading to congressional examination.

Voter discontent has increased interest in limiting the tenure of Members of Congress (as well as State officials). Proponents have taken their appeal to the states, seeking to pass ballot initiatives and pressing the legislatures to call for a constitutional convention. The legislature of South Dakota and Utah have passed resolutions calling for such a convention, and Colorado voters passed a ballot initiative to limit the tenure of their federal and state legislators. The constitutionality of state measures to limit Federal terms is widely questioned and is expected to be settled by the courts.

State legislatures are now engaged in the difficult task of redistricting House seats. Some redistricting plans will be challenged in court on various grounds such as (1) the constitutional principle of one-person, one-vote, (2) racial vote dilution in violation of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended, and (3) unconstitutional political gerrymanders. The Supreme Court, in an evolutionary line of decisions since 1964, has imposed the equality standard (i.e., precise mathematical equality) of "one-person, one-vote" on the states in drafting congressional plans.

*On May 20, the Senate passed SB #250 with a vote of 61 to 38. The bill was sent to the House and passed on June 16, (268 to 153). The president vetoed the bill on July 2, 1992.

HIGHER EDUCATION: REAUTHORIZATION OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT

Margot A. Schenet,
Coordinator
Congressional Research
Center
Library of Congress
4-09-92

The Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA), authorizing the major federal programs supporting postsecondary education, will expire during the 102d Congress. Of primary concern is Title IV of the Act, which currently provides about \$18 billion in student aid to help financially needy students attain postsecondary education in colleges, universities, and trade and technical schools. The types of aid available under Title IV include student loans, grants, work study assistance, and fellowships.

Three underlying trends in the 1980s are likely to continue to have an impact on future federal student aid policies. They are the increases in college costs that exceed inflation, the growing predominance of loans rather than grants in the type of aid available to students, and the growth in the participation of students attending proprietary (for-profit) vocational schools in student aid programs. These developments provide the context for several issues that were the focus of the hearings on reauthorization of the Higher Education Act during the 1st session of the 102d Congress. These issues included the following: Do concerns about Guaranteed Student Loan (GSL) default costs and program integrity suggest the need for reform of the structure for regulating institutional participation in student aid programs? How can complex application forms for Federal student aid and the underlying formulas for determining a family's financial need be simplified? Can the balance between loan and grant aid be shifted to reduce students' increasing reliance on loans? Can middle-income students' access to aid be increased so that increasing college costs will not restrict their postsecondary options? How can the access of disadvantaged students to postsecondary opportunities be improved?

Bills reauthorizing the HEA have been reported by the House committee (H.R. 3553) and passed by the Senate (S.1150).^{*} Both bills attempt to strengthen program integrity by instituting major changes in the structure establishing institutional eligibility for Title IV programs. Both simplify the application process and significantly modify need analysis formulas for determining a student's and his or her family's need for student aid. H.R. 3553 and S. 1150 expand grant aid through a larger Pell Grant maximum, and change GSL program terms. Both bills also establish major new early intervention programs, and a number of new initiatives in the area of teachers' programs.

Nevertheless, the bills differ significantly in their specific approach to change in these and other areas. The most important differences include the creation of a Pell Grant entitlement, the establishment of a new direct loan program to replace GSLs, and the role and standards for accrediting agencies, state licensing, and federal certification in determining the eligibility of institutions for Title IV participation. The bills also differ significantly in the formula proposed for use in determining a student's financial need, and in the extent of federal support for ongoing state programs of early intervention to motivate and support disadvantaged students to participate in postsecondary education.

^{*}This bill has been sent to the president for his signature.

HEALTH INSURANCE

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In the 102d Congress, widespread attention is being given to legislative alternatives for expanding access to health insurance. Central to the debate is the issue of how to expand access for America's estimated 34.6 million uninsured and large number of underinsured without fueling inflation in health care costs and do so at a time when significant new Federal or State spending is viewed by many as unlikely. While there is growing consensus in Congress that lack of access to adequate health insurance is a problem, there is little agreement on what, if anything, to do about it.

Some in Congress believe, for example, that the nation can only afford gradual steps toward improving health insurance coverage through such approaches as reform of the private health insurance market, or coverage of specific populations, such as infants and pregnant women. Others believe that the only way to address the problems of health care access and escalating costs is by enacting comprehensive reform, establishing a program of health insurance coverage for all that incorporates effective cost controls. Whatever approach is pursued is likely to have significant effects on individuals, businesses, government, and providers and suppliers of health care, making agreement on any one or a combination of legislative proposals difficult.

Generally, the uninsured are young (under age 24) they are poor and they have ties to the work force (primarily in small firms, in industries with seasonal or temporary employment, and in firms with a lower-skilled or less unionized work force). There is evidence that the uninsured population grew in the last decade. Insurance status has implications for access to health services; the uninsured use fewer health care services and have poorer health status than the insured.

Proposals introduced in the 102d Congress incorporate widely different approaches to expanding access to health insurance, including expanding health insurance coverage through Medicaid providing tax incentives to provide coverage privately mandating employers to extend health insurance benefits to uncovered or underinsured groups and instituting a national health insurance system. The Bush administration has offered its own proposal, which relies chiefly on tax credits and deductions to assist individuals with the purchase of private coverage.

One factor that may complicate a solution to access problems is the rising cost of health care. Over the past 10 years, health care spending has grown faster than spending in the general economy. Many believe that without major changes, the trend in spending will continue. The numbers of uninsured and underinsured individuals could increase as rising health care costs make it more expensive for individuals and employers to purchase health insurance. Any attempt to expand access to health insurance may, therefore, need to address the factors fueling health care inflation. Proposals to control health care costs are incorporated in many of the access bills and reflect varied strategies such as medical malpractice reform, encouragement of managed care, and new reimbursement systems for medical services.

As of printing, this is the most current information on these issues. Changes may have occurred by the time this curriculum reaches the classroom.

Suggested Activities

Elections

Possible Discussions:

1. Should a citizen have to meet any other requirements to be allowed to vote? How old do you think people should be to have the right to vote?
2. Do we need voter registration?
3. Should voting be required by law?
4. Why do you think voter interest and registration is lower among young adults and higher among older people?
5. Studies have shown that married people are more likely to vote than single people and people older than 35 are more likely to vote than people younger than 35, but these factors are changing all the time. Who do you think is more or less likely to vote?
6. Compare the statistics on voter turnout. Make some predictions for this year. Why do you suppose voter turnout is higher during a presidential election year?
7. Why do you think 1952, 1960, 1964, and 1968 produced uncommonly high voter turnouts?
8. In the primary, should voters be allowed to cross over and vote for a Democrat for one office and a Republican for another office (not have to vote strictly for one party)?
9. Do you think we should keep the Electoral College or elect the president directly by the people?

Candidates

Have students research candidates. Find information on their backgrounds, goals, and how they stand on issues that are important to the students.

Possible Discussions:

1. What qualities are important when evaluating a candidate?
2. Do you think the candidate qualifications for office ensure the best candidates? Should they be changed? If so, how?
3. Have students decide on the three important issues to them. How would they vote if each candidate only agreed with them on just one of the issues?

Have the students collect political cartoons and analyze them.

Tape a debate. Analyze and discuss it in class.

Possible debate substance discussions:

1. Do the candidates answer the questions directly?
2. Does the candidate seem intelligent and well informed?
3. Can you understand the candidates' stand on issues when they're finished?

Possible debate image discussions:

1. What are your impressions of the candidates?
2. Do the candidates seem sincere?
3. Do the physical characteristics influence you? Which ones? How?
4. Overall, how do you feel the debate has affected each candidates campaign for office?

Glossary

Canvass - the official tallying of all votes cast in an election

County Election Administrators - usually the Clerk and Recorder; they are the people responsible for conducting an election at the county level

Delegate - a person authorized or sent to speak and act for others; a representative

Inaccessible Polling Place - a polling place where the handicapped or senior citizens may have difficulty entering to vote

“Motor Voter” - a program to allow individuals obtaining or renewing their driver’s license to register to vote or update their registration at the same time

Nonpartisan - not controlled or influenced by, or supporting, any single political party

PAC - political action committee; an organization that makes contributions, or works to support or oppose a candidate or certain issue

Partisan - controlled or influenced by, or supporting a single political party

Poll Tax - policy of charging individuals a fixed fee in order to vote

Suffrage - the right to vote

Voter Information Pamphlet - a state publication that contains information on measures appearing on upcoming ballots so voters can educate themselves before going to the polls

